Writing Effective Performance Plans

A Workshop for Senior Executives

Department of Defense
Civilian Personnel
Management Service

www.cpms.osd.mil

Workshop Overview

- Setting the Context
- Developing an Effective Performance Plan
- Performance Planning Process – Key Elements
- Aligning Work with Organizational Goals
- Writing Your Plan – Common Terms
- Developing Effective Performance Requirements
- Writing Effective Performance Requirements
- SMART Q Framework
- Writing SMART Q Performance Requirements
- Translating Requirements into Accomplishments
- Engaging in Ongoing Dialogue
- Taking Advantage of Available Resources

Setting the Context

- Increased emphasis on executive accountability

- SES bonus payout directly related to demonstrated results

- Aligning organizational goals with individual performance – starts at the top

  - ✓ Executives must demonstrate this alignment and support transition to organization-wide pay-for-performance system

Results.Results.Results.

Setting the Context

- Executives take the lead and set the example

- Core of successful performance management systems:
  - ✓ An increased emphasis on aligning individual work with mission
  - ✓ A commitment to acknowledging and rewarding performance
  - ✓ An ability to distinguish levels of performance
  - ✓ Ongoing communications

Developing an Effective Performance Plan

- Writing an effective plan:
  - ✓ Clarifies your priorities
  - ✓ Establishes performance criteria
  - ✓ Sets into motion the ability for your organization to cascade priorities
  - ✓ Focuses you and your organization on a common set of requirements
  - ✓ Makes concrete to your staff what is important/what will be rewarded
  - ✓ Demonstrates your commitment to organizational effectiveness

Performance Planning Process – Key Elements

- **There are three steps in the performance planning process:**

  - ✓ Step 1 – Align and Plan Your Performance

    - Ensure that your plan is aligned with your organizational goals and mission

  - ✓ Step 2 – Write Your Performance Plan

    - Complete your performance plan

  - ✓ Step 3 – Engage in Ongoing Dialogue

    - Establish a plan to ensure that you and your executive have regularly scheduled conversations to discuss your plan

Aligning Work with Organizational Goals

- Performance plans must be derived from, aligned with and linked to

    - ✓ President's Management Agenda (PMA)

    - ✓ Mission statement

    - ✓ Strategic Plan

    - ✓ Organizational goals

    - ✓ Agency performance plans and budget priorities

- Relationship must be clear and transparent

- Responsibility must be obvious

- Results must be demonstrated and measurable

DoD Strategic Plan(

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Component Vision, Mission and Goals

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Organization Vision, Mission and Goals

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Individual Performance

Aligning Work with Organizational Goals

- **Ask yourself**

  - ✓ What are my primary goals and expectations relative to achieving my organizational goals?

  - ✓ Does leadership have a shared understanding of my priorities and responsibilities?

  - ✓ Do I have the right type of resources to achieve my priorities and responsibilities?

  - ✓ Do I have a communications strategy in place to keep my staff informed so we have a shared understanding of how to accomplish our priorities and responsibilities?

> Answers to these questions help you determine what your performance plan includes.

Writing Your Plan – Common Terms

- Performance Element – the major job assignments and/or position responsibilities that contribute to accomplishing the mission and organizational goals.

  - ✓ Leadership/supervision (mandatory)

  - ✓ Contribution to mission (mandatory)

  - ✓ Resource management

  - ✓ Communication

  - ✓ Cooperation/Teamwork

  - ✓ Customer care (mandatory)

  - ✓ Technical competence/problem-solving

Writing Your Plan – Common Terms

- Performance Requirement – also known as an objective – identifies what you plan to accomplish during the rating period

  - ✓ You must write at least one requirement (objective) for each mandatory performance element

- Performance Level – criteria incorporated into your requirements to define what you want to be held accountable for

  - ✓ The performance criteria are written at the "Achieve Expectations" (AE) level

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Developing Effective Performance Requirements

- You must have at least one requirement for each mandatory element.

  - ✓ Tip: To ensure that you are not focusing on tasks, the general rule is one to three requirements per element.

- Requirements draw a line of sight between your work and the organization's success.

- Ask yourself

  - ✓ How are you challenged? (For example: Does it require you to move beyond your current level of performance to achieve the objective?)

  - ✓ How does the requirement lead to improved individual performance?

  - ✓ How does achieving the requirement lead to improved organizational performance?

Writing Effective Performance Requirements

- SMART-Q is a framework for success

  - ✓ Easy to understand

  - ✓ Breaks down the process into concrete steps

  - ✓ Results in an objective that is easily understood and results may be demonstrated

  - ✓ Levels expectations about performance and what is expected

- Because of the emphasis on results, we include "Q" – Quality

- Each requirement must include the SMART- Q framework

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Writing Effective Performance Requirements

- Drafting performance requirements takes you from the general to the specific

- Agreement on specifics may require dialogue with your executive

- This dialogue establishes foundation for ongoing communications

  ✓ Mutual understanding of alignment and expectations

  ✓ Leads to outstanding results

SMART Q Framework

- **S**pecific: In detail, what will be accomplished? Is it concrete?

- **M**easurable: How will I know my requirement is achieved? Can the result be determined?

- **A**ligned: To which organizational goal is my requirement aligned?

- **R**ealistic (relevant): Is the requirement relevant to the mission and organizational goals and can I actually get it done?

- **T**imed (time bound): Did I identify a completion date, scheduled milestones or another way to determine when the requirement needs to be completed?

- **Q**uality: Based on my position, am I identifying a requirement that I can complete with the level of quality and result that will be meaningful?

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Writing SMART Q Performance Requirements

- I am the Executive Security Officer:

- Protect and defend our critical infrastructures, networks, and information to maximize mission assurance (Goal 2):

  - ✓ Implement 90% of digital signatures and strong authentication across the Department by 30 Sep 06.

  - ✓ Deliver a means for 75% of installations to self-assess Critical Infrastructure by 30 Sept 06.

  - ✓ Integrate IA into 85% of programs and complete Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) certification and accreditation for 90% of systems by 30 Sep 06.

Writing SMART Q Performance Requirements

- I am the Executive Security Officer:

  Under Element – Contribution to Mission

  Focused on specific outcomes with realistic outcomes that are aligned, measurable and within the executive's purview

  At the end of the performance cycle, the executive will be able to identify his/her accomplishments and the impact of the results on his/her organization.

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Writing SMART Q Performance Requirements

- I am an Executive Judge:

- Serve the soldier and veteran in a courteous and timely manner; decide their cases on behalf of the Secretary with justice, equity and compassion; and in the public interest; and present decisions in clear and concise responses (Goal 4).

  - ✓ 80% of cases processed within the 300 day congressionally mandated timeframe.

  - ✓ 80% of active duty officer separations and grade determinations were decided within 48 hours of presentation for final decision.

  - ✓ 80% of initial case processing at no more than 72 hours from receipt of application.

Writing SMART Q Performance Requirements

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- ■ I am an HR Executive:

- ■ Oversee the development and sustainment of programs and policies to fill vacant positions with the required numbers, mix, and quality employees to support the organization and and facilitate its transformation (Goal 7).

  - ✓ The time to fill vacant positions will be completed within 30 days of receipt by May 2006.

  - ✓ 90% fill of production recruiter positions will be achieved by September 2006.

  - ✓ 80% of HR recruitment policies will be written in a clear and cogent manner to facilitate execution at the program level with minimal interpretation by September 2006.

Writing SMART Q Performance Requirements

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Writing Effective Performance Plans

Writing SMART Q Performance Requirements

- Avoid these common errors when writing your objectives

  - ✓ The objective is vague.

  - ✓ The objective is not measurable or verifiable.

  - ✓ The objective is too complex or lengthy.

  - ✓ The objective is not tied to a timeline.

  - ✓ The objective places emphasis on inappropriate aspects of the work.

  - ✓ The employee has too many objectives.

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Translating Requirements into Accomplishments

- Accomplishments need to make the connection between what you did and why it matters.

- Consider these tips

  - ✓ Write them in a clear and concise manner.

  - ✓ Identify specific examples of what you achieved.

  - ✓ Demonstrate how your accomplishments support your organization.

  - ✓ Focus on results.

Engaging in Ongoing Dialogue

- Ongoing communication with your executive is key

- Not enough time is an excuse – if you value performance, you will make time

- Share expectations and priorities drive the process

- Ask yourself:

  - ✓ Do I have a clear understanding of his/her priorities and how this impacts my work – has his/her priorities changed?

  - ✓ Has anything occurred that requires me to adjust my plan?

  - ✓ Do I need additional resources/support to achieve my requirements

Writing Effective Performance Plans

Taking Advantage of Available Resources

- **Need more help completing your performance plan?**

    - ✓ Visit the SES page on the CPMS website at: http://www.cpms.osd.mil/sespm/index.htm

    - ✓ Visit OPM's SES and performance management information at http://www.opm.gov/ses

    - ✓ Visit the Whitehouse's page on PMA at: http://www.whitehouselgov/omb/budintegration/pma_index.asp

    - ✓ Read the Handbook for Measuring Employee performance at: http://www.opm.gov/perfom/WPPDF/2002/Handbook.pdf

    - ✓ Read DoD's "Department of Defense Civilian Personnel Manual (CPM)", SC920.SUBCHAPTER 920 – Executive and Senior Professional Pay and Performance System

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